

**FITZGERALD'S DICK DIVER:
A WARRIOR FADING INTO OBSCURITY**

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DAVID LEO TANGEMAN

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Approved by:

Kenneth H. Johnston

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Tender Is the Night traces the decline, failure, and retreat of Doctor Richard (Dick) Diver, the protagonist of F. Scott Fitzgerald's last complete novel. Armed with pre-Civil War codes of courage, integrity and honesty, Diver fights a losing battle against the pressures and temptations of a post-World War I world, a world dominated by the "new" woman, dedicated to money and leisure, and characterized by corruption and dissipation. Tender Is the Night is a novel of opposites, of horn-locked antagonists struggling desperately to maintain their independence. The basic--and central--conflict of the novel is not external, however, but internal. The title of the book is taken from Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" and, as Sergio Perosa remarks, "bears a vague hint of dissolution and death, a foreboding of the protagonist's gradual sinking into darkness and oblivion."¹ Dick Diver, similar to the persona in "Ode to a Nightingale," is a man divided within himself. He wants to be both the scientist and the romantic, but for him the two roles are mutually exclusive and, Hamlet-like, he wavers fatally in his selection. The son of a poor minister, Diver feels as much attraction to the temple's money changers, who can underwrite the romantic life, as he does to the pure altar of psychiatry. His inability to resolve his own internal civil war, to choose between science and romance, leads him inevitably into an external

¹Sergio Perosa, The Art of F. Scott Fitzgerald, trans. Charles Matz and the author (Ann Arbor, 1965), p. 116.

conflict triggered by his marriage to his social and philosophic opposite, Nicole Warren, a wealthy girl from Chicago. His values are those of the old Southern aristocracy inherited from his father, a Southerner from Virginia who as a young man migrated to the North after the Civil War. Ill-equipped, the son is thrust into a world which he does not comprehend and into a struggle which he is fated to lose. Dick Diver is a flawed warrior irresolutely defending his pre-Civil War codes against the gradual encroachments of a new post-World War I society which ultimately defeats him and forces him, "the last hope of a decaying clan,"² into an obscure retreat.

This study will be based upon the "final version" of Tender Is the Night.³ The "final version," first published in 1948 and edited by Malcolm Cowley, focuses more sharply and consistently upon the flawed Dick Diver and his story; the reorganization of the novel, which Fitzgerald himself had undertaken before his death, makes clearer the reasons for Diver's decline. The reorganization stresses, among other things, the relationship between Dick Diver and the war motif, and thus better explains his inability to function in the post-war world; it more vividly portrays Diver as the

²Tender Is the Night, ed. Malcolm Cowley, in Three Novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald (New York, 1953), p. 321. All further references to the novel are to this text and will be indicated by parentheses in the body of the text.

³As various critics and biographers note, Fitzgerald first published TITN in 1934 under the most adverse conditions imaginable. Not only was his wife Zelda establishing a pattern of seemingly continuous mental disorder and Fitzgerald himself degenerating into a weakened mental and physical state, but the serialization of TITN in Scribner's Magazine was accorded neither the critical acclaim nor the popular support Fitzgerald needed and desired so badly to bolster his sagging self-confidence in his own powers as an artist. Because little time existed between magazine serialization and book publication, TITN was published in April 1934 without major revisions to the magazine version. Fitzgerald, however, was dissatisfied with the original version; he felt that the novel should begin with the young psychiatrist in Switzerland, rather than with Rosemary at the Riviera. He wanted the focus, from the very beginning, to be on Diver.

idealistic warrior who marches into battle unprepared for the rigors of warfare, who allows the enemy to subvert his two greatest weapons of truth and intelligence. "In all seventeen drafts," Milton Stern maintains, "it is clear that what Fitzgerald is concerned with is a presentation of the glittering golden world in its effect on the yearning, searching American, on the bitter arriviste, on the dewy naif, on the strong and callous rich, but most of all, on the innocent, expectant idealist."⁴

Henry Dan Piper's observation in F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Critical Portrait that successive revisions of Tender Is the Night advance "from introspection to that broader vision of the relationship of man to society"⁵ precisely pinpoints another of Fitzgerald's objectives in his reorganization. Fitzgerald was a social historian who, in his novels and certain of his stories, managed to capture the essence of an event or an era with uncanny precision. In his fictional creations, Fitzgerald selected diverse, yet representative, elements and blended them together into a credible union deliberately aimed at the reader to make him aware of broad and powerful undercurrents in American society. Fitzgerald's "final version" of Tender Is the Night, representing his "most considered judgment,"⁶ gives us that broader vision of American society by more sharply emphasizing the backdrop of war against which Dick Diver plays out his role. As Stern perceptively remarks, "in the book's pervasive metaphor of war, Fitzgerald uses the Civil War as he uses World War I--as an end to innocence, as an end to the good gone days of graces and virtues dissolved into the corruption

⁴Milton R. Stern, The Golden Moment: The Novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald (Urbana, Ill., 1970), pp. 294-5.

⁵Henry D. Piper, F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Critical Portrait (New York, 1965), p. 228.

⁶Matthew J. Bruccoli, The Composition of Tender Is the Night: A Study of the Manuscripts (Pittsburg, 1963), p. 199.

associated with U.S. Grant, who had been so full of promise."⁷

Dick Diver is essentially a man at war, and Fitzgerald skillfully employs a pattern of allusions and references to the Civil War and World War I in order to suggest the historic dimensions of his hero's struggle and defeat. In fact, Diver's story is literally "framed" with the references to Grant at Galena. In the initial reference, Fitzgerald deliberately stresses Diver's heroic possibilities, likening him to Grant, "lolling in his general store in Galena," "ready to be called to an intricate destiny" (p. 6). But the concluding reference represents Nicole's casual and ironic reflections that Diver's "career was biding its time, again like Grant's in Galena" (p. 334).

The reference to Grant's awaiting his destiny at Galena is intended to symbolize Diver's role and destiny in the novel and to suggest that Diver's experience is emblematic of the American experience since the Civil War. The historic reference is to Grant's temporary residence in Galena, Illinois, which ended in 1861 when he and other Galena volunteers marched to Springfield, the state capital, and volunteered to defend the Union cause. Grant had resigned from the army in 1854 following warnings from his commanding officer about his drinking habits, and, in the following seven years, he had drifted from failure to failure, working variously as a farmer and debt collector in St. Louis before moving to Galena where he worked as a clerk in a leather shop.⁸ Ulysses S. Grant, whose life validated the American

⁷Stern, p. 311.

⁸William B. Hesseltine, Ulysses S. Grant: Politician (New York, 1935), pp. 14-18. Grant's forced retirement from the army for drinking and the seven years of failure which followed must have also struck responsive chords in Fitzgerald who considered himself primarily a novelist and was deeply concerned about his own growing reliance upon alcohol and the seven-year plus debilitating silence since publication of his last novel.

belief in success through adversity, was called to his "intricate destiny" and abandoned a tranquil, though diminished, existence at Galena to fight in a Civil War dedicated to preservation of the Union. The Civil War was, as one critic observed, "the event which chained two unalterably opposed worlds to one another."⁹ The Union which rose from the ashes of that war, and over which Grant presided as President, was radically different, however, from the one he had left Galena to defend. The standards of personal integrity and honesty which Grant carried with him into the Presidency were no longer adequate in a new America lusting for money and power. The failure of his presidential administration testifies to those changing standards. Nevertheless, Grant, (like Fitzgerald's own father, Edward), retained his pre-Civil War values to the end of his days.

How then does Fitzgerald use Grant at Galena to sum up the novel's import? Grant at Galena represents both the promise of America and the fulfillment of that promise. He is the average American who steps forth from the masses to accept the mantle and sceptre of fame and fortune which talent, industry, and/or business acumen have earned him. Grant stands, like young Dick Diver in 1917, on the threshold of his future, an emergent figure possessed with personal courage, intelligence, and integrity. His ability as a general and the report of his integrity as a man thrust him into the national limelight, and he became the "saviour" of a nation. The Diver of 1917 shares the potential of Grant at Galena; he is potentially the embodiment and manifestation of the national spirit, the man of the hour, "the last hope of a decaying clan," who steps forth from the shadows to preserve and defend a threatened code of existence. Supposedly strengthened by his

⁹Leonard Kriegel, Edmund Wilson (Carbondale, Ill., 1971), p. 94.

"fallow" period, Diver leaves the Galena-like redoubt of his student days to enter active conflict only to discover like Grant, once the battle is "won," that he is ill-prepared to survive the "peace" of the post-war world.

If the initial reference to Grant in the novel leads us to view Diver as a man of "early national promise," the concluding reference, as Stern maintains, reveals him as "the debauchery of that promise."¹⁰ Mid-nineteenth-century America was a political and social composite of a Southern agrarian economy, leisurely and gentlemanly, and of a rapidly expanding Northern industrial economy, fast-paced and cut-throat. The South's crushing defeat during the Civil War assured the dominance of the industrialized North. Greed, selfishness, and the pursuit of money and power characterized the post-war era. The old virtues of courage, honesty, honor, and integrity seemed strangely out of place and obsolete. As President, Grant himself presided over Reconstruction, a period best characterized by the Northern carpetbaggers, who exploited the unsettled conditions in the post-war South for their own personal monetary gain. After a presidency rocked by scandals and a post-presidential period marked by disastrous personal reverses, Grant retired a ruined man to Saratoga, New York, to write his memoirs and die. Because death rendered Grant's failure irreversible, the concluding reference in Tender Is the Night to Grant at Galena is drained of all possibilities of renewal and is purely ironic in intention. Nicole tells us in the novel's last chapter that "Dick opened an office in Buffalo, but evidently without success" (p. 334). Diver's failure in Buffalo establishes an unbreakable pattern of failure which follows him from place to place as he recedes into the countryside. He becomes, like Grant, a man engaged in a gradual,

¹⁰Stern, p. 311.

irreversible dissolution into obscurity and death. Thus the optimism of the initial reference to Grant at Galena fades with the realization that Grant's defense of the Union in the Civil War produced a new America which he could not govern and which flung him aside. It is against this threat that Diver steps forth into the novel to do battle for an old world which believes in ascendancy through adherence to intelligence and truth.

As Diver fades through the novel, he is shadowed by an older America which stands in mute contrast to his new world. Only gradually does it become clear that Fitzgerald has endowed Diver with the virtues and codes of pre-Civil War America and thrust him into a post-World War I environment where his outmoded codes are systematically subverted by money and leisure. Diver, like Grant, eventually realizes hopelessly that a new world has come into existence intent upon "reconstructing" society and replacing codes of responsibility with a dedicated pursuit of money and pleasure. For Fitzgerald, insists Stern, the Civil War was "the real breaking point in American history, culminating in the emergent 'new' America following World War I."¹¹ Edwin Fussell is in general agreement: " . . . Fitzgerald repeatedly affirms throughout *Tender Is the Night* his faith in an older, simpler America, generally identified as pre-Civil War; the emotion is that of pastoral, the social connotations agrarian and democratic. In such areas he continues to find fragments of basic human value, social, moral, and religious."¹² It is the contrast between that old world--which Fitzgerald's lifelong friend Edmund Wilson called "'heroic, old-fashioned America'"¹³--and the new grasping

¹¹Stern, p. 370.

¹²Edwin Fussell, "Fitzgerald's Brave New World," F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Arthur Mizener (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1963), pp. 44-5.

¹³Kriegel, p. 94.

world of money and privilege which brings Diver into a belated awareness of what has been lost. His is a tragic fate.

Dick Diver's tragic flaw is his adherence to heroic, old-fashioned virtues which makes him vulnerable and ultimately destroys him. Fitzgerald describes Diver's "illusions of eternal strength and health, and of the essential goodness of people" (p. 5) as his Achilles' heel. He inherits the virtues of an earlier, more mature, Southern America from his father and from the two proud widows "who had raised him to believe that nothing could be superior to 'good instincts,' honor, courtesy, and courage" (p. 22). When Diver recalls that older America, he momentarily recaptures "the old loyalties and devotions" (p. 162), but his attempts to maintain standards of self-reliance and personal responsibility by "living rather ascetically, travelling third-class when he was alone, with the cheapest wine, and good care of his clothes, and penalizing himself for any extravagances" are countered by Nicole who, "wanting to own him, wanting him to stand still forever," "encouraged any slackness on his part, and in multiplying ways he was constantly inundated by a trickling of goods and money" (p. 183). Pitted against the world of pleasure, Diver struggles "to keep alive the low painful fire of intelligence" (p. 212). But all of Diver's efforts are doomed to failure from the first because the very values he maintains are disdained and rejected by the new world.

The "final version" of the novel is divided into five, basically chronological, sections, the titles of which foreshadow the decline and failure of Dick Diver:

- Book I "Case History" 1917-1919
- Book II "Rosemary's Angle" 1919-1925
- Book III "Casualties" 1925
- Book IV "Escape" 1925-1929
- Book V "The Way Home" 1929-1930

The novel's first section, "Case History," is told primarily from Dick Diver's point of view and stresses his irresolution by providing a "case history" of the flaws and weaknesses which precede and follow his marriage to Nicole. As the title suggests, "Rosemary's Angle" is told mainly from Rosemary Hoyt's point of view; Rosemary, an eighteen-year-old actress, reflects the awe and childlike wonder which the glittering attractiveness and irresponsible gaiety of the Divers create for the innocent and naive. "Casualties" lacks a particularized focus but shifts from one "casualty" to another, presenting a composite view of Diver's surrender and the impact of that surrender upon himself and those around him. "Escape" essentially returns once more to Diver's point of view and follows his desperate dissolution. The novel's last section, "The Way Home," is told primarily from Nicole's point of view and thereby stresses her ascendancy and dominance in the new world. Thus, through variation in point of view, Fitzgerald affords the reader a broad perspective from which to assess and interpret Diver's decline.

"Case History" opens in 1917 with Diver studying in Zurich, Switzerland, a "sanctuary" secure from the First World War, "washed on one side by the waves of thunder around Gorizia and on another by the cataracts along the Somme and the Aisne" (p. 3). Diver has, in fact, spent the entire war in one sanctuary or another. But in each sanctuary he dedicates his full intelligence to science and his dream of being the best psychologist who ever lived. He was an Oxford Rhodes Scholar in 1914 and "in 1916 he managed to get to Vienna under the impression that, if he did not make haste, the great Freud would eventually succumb to an airplane bomb" (pp. 3-4). Fitzgerald calls the time in Vienna the "heroic period" (p. 4) of Dick Diver's life and certainly his existence there is sheltered by the aegis

of scientific dedication. His time is spent studying and writing, and "he had no idea that he was charming, that the affection he gave and inspired was anything unusual among healthy people" (p. 4). Despite the war and the war-shortages which force him to burn his books for fuel--but not before he commits to memory an abstract of the contents of each textbook--he experiences "the fine quiet of the scholar which is nearest of all things to heavenly peace" (p. 4).

But the "heroic period," during which Diver purposefully and unswervingly defends, not his country, but the higher ideals of science and intelligence, comes to an end when Diver rooms with Ed Elkins. Elkins, an American secretary at the Embassy in Vienna, could "name you all the quarterbacks at New Haven for thirty years" (p. 4) and apparently is responsible for the "two nice girl visitors" who visit their apartment occasionally. Dick is puzzled by the nonproductive use Elkins makes of his intellect, and "his contact with Ed Elkins aroused in him a first faint doubt as to the quality of his [own] mental processes; he could not feel that they were profoundly different from the thinking of Elkins . . ." (p. 4). The weak point in Diver's defenses is understandable. Despite the shortages caused by the war and "the long trains of blinded or one-legged men, or dying trunks," "even in war days it [1917] was a fine age for Dick, who was already too valuable, too much of a capital investment, to be shot off in a gun" (p. 3). Diver apologetically confesses "that the war didn't touch him at all" (p. 3). But Diver's aloofness from the war insulates him from the changes being wrought by the war, and it is precisely for that reason that Diver fails to realize that America already regards him as a "capital investment." Elkins and the other "clever" men represent the new Americans who dedicate themselves to the pursuit of pleasure, who reject the challenge and

responsibility of mental discipline. Diver has moments when he is jealous of these new Americans and wishes he could "'build out some broken side [of his life] till it was better than the original structure'" (p. 4). But while his life is centered around his Galena-like sanctuary, Diver finds little difficulty in defending his dedication to science and disciplined intelligence. Once he is thrust outside that sanctuary, however, he begins to waver in both defense and dedication.

In his New Haven college days, through a process of self-deception, Diver had avoided personal conflicts and consequently had earned the nickname "lucky Dick." Now as a scientist, when he should be dedicated "especially [to] good sense" (p. 5), Diver, like a romantic youth, longs for some conflict to test the mettle of his character, even though he knows that this desire is "specious and 'American'" ("his criterion of uncerebral phrase-making was that it was American") (pp. 4,5). He knows that "the price of his intactness [in effect, his failure to be "clever"] was incompleteness" (p. 5). But "cleverness" demands an Elkins-like misuse and misdirection of intelligence which any seeker of truth would find objectionable. Thus the test he yearned for is already underway, and like the man who worked two years on understanding the armadillo brain, Diver explores his internal conflicts. But his inexperience--and perhaps his habit of self-deception--leads him to believe that he can discover and find contentment in a world of pleasure and money controlled and defined by intelligence and truth. Diver's illusions "were the illusions of a nation, the lies of generations of frontier mothers who had to croon falsely that there were no wolves outside the cabin door" (p. 5).

Once Diver has completed his peaceful studies in Vienna, his vulnerability becomes immediately apparent. He is ordered by the army to join a

neurological unit in Bar-sur-Aube, France, but is disgusted with the executive nature of his work. Following his discharge in 1919, he returns immediately to Zurich. Zurich is like an American city where life is "a perpendicular starting off to a postcard heaven" (p. 7); it sharply contrasts with Bar-sur-Aube, where Diver sensed "in finite French lanes that there was nothing more" and felt the "French vines growing over one's feet on the ground" (p. 7). Although in Switzerland he feels like a toymaker poking at brains rather than a scientific tornado from America, Diver elects to remain in Zurich. Here, in this gateway to a "postcard heaven," he encounters an attractive, wealthy young woman who, ultimately, will test his professional dedication to the breaking point. She is the youthful, vibrant--and schizophrenic--Nicole Warren. "An empty child," Fussell calls her, "representative of her social class, of the manners and morals of the 'twenties, and of the world of values for which America, like Diver, was once more selling its soul."¹⁴ But Diver sees her as "the prettiest thing I ever saw" (p. 8) with an angel's face which made it seem as if "she was coming from a wood into clear moonlight" (p. 26). He senses an "excitement about her that seemed to reflect all the excitement of the world" (p. 25). Nicole temptingly embodies the other world that Diver is attracted to, and eventually he will attempt to wed that world to his own of intelligence and truth. For a while he will resist the attractions of Nicole and her world, but he vacillates and his resistance is sporadic. Nicole is first attracted to Diver by his military uniform, but she soon discovers this young man is no battle-hardened warrior. In fact, she observes that he is "all soft like a big cat" (p. 10). Diver's feline softness reflects his inner vacillation, and Nicole--aided by Diver himself--molds his pliable nature into the

¹⁴Fussell, p. 51.

romantic image he craves.

Diver's romanticism stands in sharp contrast to the scientific caution of his fellow psychiatrist Franz Gregorovius, to the scientific dignity of Professor Dohmler, the director of the Zurich clinic, and to Diver's own professed professional standards. Franz not only is immensely disciplined but he also exercises proper professional caution; his adventurism remains rigidly confined within the strictures of an impressive family tradition of duly-considered psychiatric innovations. Dohmler represents the paragon of psychiatric excellence. Diver himself boasts that he wants to be the best psychologist who ever lived but, when he dines with Franz and his wife, he feels oppressed "by the sudden contracting of horizon" and finds it hard "to think of deliberately cutting life down to the scale of an inherited suit" (pp. 22,23). "The post-war months in France, and the lavish liquidations taking place under the aegis of American splendor, had affected Dick's outlook. Also, men and women had made much of him, and perhaps what had brought him back to the center of the great Swiss watch was an intuition that this was not too good for a serious man" (pp. 22-3). Diver's return to Dohmler's Zurich clinic, according to James Ellis, "is not a return to work and study so much as it is an attempt to escape from a way of life and a side of himself which he does not wish to acknowledge."¹⁵ But even in Switzerland, Diver starts awake at night wondering whether he is like the rest after all. "In the dead white hours in Zurich . . . he used to think that he wanted to be good, he wanted to be kind, he wanted to be brave and wise, but it was all pretty difficult. He wanted to be loved, too, if he could fit it in" (p. 23).

¹⁵James Ellis, "Fitzgerald's Fragmented Hero: Dick Diver," The University Review, 32 (October 1965), p. 45.

Diver's susceptibility to romantic impulse is clearly in evidence in the early stages of his association with Nicole Warren. Fitzgerald makes it quite clear that Diver literally holds the key to his own and to Nicole's future (p. 30). Initially, he accepts the soundness of Franz's and especially Dohmler's admonitions that the relationship with Nicole constitutes a professional situation and, mustering the necessary defenses, adheres to their advice that the relationship must be immediately terminated before it adversely affects Nicole's ability to transfer her affections. Also, "the logic of his life tended away from the girl" (p. 28). But even as he performs the external actions dictated by logic, Diver fails to check his deepening emotional response to Nicole. He is drawn into an internal conflict between reason and emotion, and, as though caught in a field of centripetal/centrifugal forces, he wavers between science and romance, between a resolute defense of his profession and an irresolute, compromised one. As if to demonstrate his full awareness of the dangers of his situation, Diver writes himself "a memorandum [detailing Nicole's shortcomings] that would have been convincing to anyone save to him who had written it" (p. 38). But the sight of a "cured" Nicole, who has transferred her affections to a youthful lover, only moves Diver to jealousy.

Diver begins to regard himself as a "prisoner of Chillon" locked within the dungeon of science while Nicole is enjoying the gay life outside. Finally, Diver succumbs to his own romantic inclinations, experiencing "a sort of drunken flush pierced with voices, unimportant voices that did not know how much he was loved" (p. 42). Thus "lucky Dick" physically acknowledges his love to Nicole on the horseshoe path, but his submission is anticlimactic in light of his earlier decision to reject the dictates of logic and to ignore those "unimportant voices" urging him to defend his

intellectual ideals against possible encroachments. The train ride back to the Zurichsee which follows his declaration of love is indeed, as Fitzgerald so carefully suggests, "a trial flight," "a prefiguration of another journey" (p. 50). Dick and Nicole embark on a journey during the course of which "comes the afternoon with the journey fading and dying, but quickening again at the end" (p. 50). Diver deposits her "outside the sad door on the Zurichsee" asylum and walks away knowing "her problem was one they had together for good now" (p. 50). Diver has indeed left Galena and his impending union will engage him in a conflict which he cannot win, for he is a warrior flawed by his romantic notion that he can possess the best of both worlds and escape compromising or sacrificing one or the other.

Although the second section is entitled "Rosemary's Angle," it nonetheless opens with Baby Warren's investigations into Diver's intentions toward Nicole and into his social and financial status. The investigation is conducted relentlessly by Baby who knows she is in the right, who knows that "face to face, her father would have it on almost any clergyman," who knows that the Warrens "were an American ducal family without a title" (p. 53). "But she did not know that twice Dick had come close to flinging the marriage in her face. All that saved it this time was Nicole finding their table and glowing away, white and fresh and new in the September morning" (p. 54). Dick's desire to possess the romantic vision causes him to compromise his dignity, and that initial compromise foreshadows the endless succession of compromises required to maintain his romantic, "ideal" union. And so Dick and Nicole are married, and the point of view now shifts temporarily to Nicole.

Nicole's rambling, disjointed account of their marriage stresses not only her recurrent mental collapses but also the ever-increasing dissipation

of Diver's scientific existence. "Unknown to her," Ellis observes, "is the fact that their marriage was prompted not only by his love for her but also by his dissatisfaction with what is to him the sterility of psychiatry and by his desire for a life of 'grace and adventure.'"¹⁶ Fussell is in general agreement: "Diver is the man with the innate capacity for romantic wonder, temporarily a member of the American leisure class of the 'twenties, an 'organizer of private gaiety, curator of richly incrustated happiness.' His intellectual and imaginative energies have been diverted from normal creative and functional channels and expended on the effort to prevent, for a handful of the very rich, the American dream from revealing its nightmarish realities."¹⁷ Nicole refers to herself as Pallas Athene because, similar to the mythological Athene from the brain of Zeus, Nicole sprang from the mind of a new America full-grown and in full romantic/moneyed armor. Nicole also perceives that Dick is no longer insulated from life, that despite his belief "that it's a confession of weakness for a scientist not to write," he nevertheless "can't find time for writing" and is bored with Zurich (p. 56). She even observes that Diver has begun to sign hotel registers as Mr. and Mrs. Diver rather than Doctor and Mrs. Diver. Throughout Nicole's narrative, the gradual erosion of Diver's scientific dedication becomes more and more obvious.

The gradual encroachments upon Diver's integrity continue throughout the remaining chapters of the section, and Rosemary Hoyt, a wide-eyed, successful film-actress, serves as commentator on the weakening process. The innocent and impressionable Rosemary, who embodies the struggling American middle-class attitudes inherited from her mother, dramatizes the

¹⁶Ellis, p. 47.

¹⁷Fussell, p. 50.

impact and the attraction which the new world of pleasure has on the average American and on the young post-war generation. Rosemary observes the Divers in close perspective yet remains naive and unaware of the sub-surface depth and complexity of their lives:

Her naivete responded whole-heartedly to the expensive simplicity of the Divers, unaware of its complexity and its lack of innocence, unaware that it was all a selection of quality rather than quantity from the run of the world's bazaar; and that the simplicity of behavior also, the nursery-like peace and good will, the emphasis on the simpler virtues, was part of a desperate bargain with the gods and had been attained through struggles she could not have guessed at. At that moment the Divers represented externally the exact furthestmost evolution of a class, so that most people seemed awkward beside them--in reality a qualitative change had already set in that was not at all apparent to Rosemary (p. 77).

But Rosemary will nonetheless fall under the domination of Nicole; Nicole "illustrated very simple principles, containing in herself her own doom, but illustrated them so accurately that there was grace in the procedure, and presently Rosemary would try to imitate it" (p. 114). Attracted by the deceptive glitter of their pleasurable world and unaware of Dick Diver's compromise with the gods, Rosemary can only stand in awe of the casual, moneyed existence of the Divers.

But Diver, who creates such awe in Rosemary, continues to be plagued with internal strife resulting from his intermittent confrontations with his own wasted talents. Having previously elected to dedicate his professional talents to Nicole's recovery and to participation in her gay world, Diver needlessly debilitates his remaining strength through whole-hearted participation in her world. The point of view again temporarily shifts to Nicole, and she comments upon Dick's dilemma prior to the party at the Villa Diana; she

. . . saw that one of his most characteristic moods was upon him, the excitement that swept everyone up in it and was inevitably followed by his own form of melancholy, which he never displayed but at which she guessed. This excitement about things reached an intensity out of proportion to their importance, generating a really extraordinary virtuosity with people. Save among a few of the tough-minded and perennially suspicious, he had the power of arousing a fascinating and uncritical love. The reaction came when he realized the waste and extravagance involved. He sometimes looked back with awe at the carnivals of affections he had given, as a general might gaze upon a massacre he had ordered to satisfy an impersonal blood lust (p. 84).

Diver can muster his intense preoccupation with the happiness of others only as long as they subscribe to his world completely. Should they resist his mood, however, Diver is unmasked as the commander of transient and insignificant forces; " . . . he evaporated before their eyes, leaving little communicable memory of what he had said or done" (p. 84). Thus Diver, divorced from his true talent and his true codes, becomes dependent upon emotional moods and uncritical love in his new amusing world.

The general of the carnival leads his friends and acquaintances into a kind of wasteland. Even the dissipated Abe North senses the superficiality of the Divers' life style: " . . . the fact of The Divers together is more important to their friends than many of them realize. Of course it's done at a certain sacrifice--sometimes they seem just rather charming figures in a ballet, and worth just the attention you give a ballet . . ." (p. 101). Tommy Barban clearly illustrates the impact of the Divers upon the carnival soldiers. He is a rootless soldier in search of a perpetual war. His search for violence (self-destruction?) is stimulated by his association with the Divers: "'When I'm in a rut,'" he tells Rosemary, "'I come to see the Divers, because then I know that in a few weeks I'll want to go to war'"; "' . . . they make me want to go to war'" (p. 87). Nevertheless, Barban risks his life to defend the Divers' "honor." To defend them Tommy engages

in a duel with the writer McKisco, a duel which is not only senseless in its origin but also ridiculous in its execution. Both parties square off at forty paces "to vindicate their honor," but neither finds himself vindicated nor possesses the gentlemanly traits to lose gracefully. The mock-heroic scene, which dissolves with McKisco retching in the bushes and the homosexual Campion, "the only casualty of the duel" (p. 109), passed out in the shrubbery, graphically conveys the perversions to which the old code of honor has been subverted.

The casual backdrop of war, reminiscent of Diver's student days in the early chapters, recurs in the novel's middle section and provides an appropriate setting as Diver closes with his enemy. Even the section's title--"Casualties"--bodes ill for Diver and for the unsuspecting participants in his war. The action itself begins with a tour of the Somme battlefield which Diver is conducting for a small party that includes Rosemary and Abe North. "This chapter," asserts Matthew Bruccoli, "is thematically significant, for it is one of the places where Fitzgerald unmistakably indicates that the novel is a commentary on the post-war world. Fitzgerald excelled at conveying moods; the mood that emanates from the visit to the battlefield is one of sadness and regret--a sense of loss."¹⁸ Diver's tour of the symbolic World War I battlefield with its "neat restored trench" reveals that he does not comprehend the true nature of the real battlefield. His attitudes indicate that he has not yet reached full awareness of the changes wrought by the past war. Conducting the tour with information garnered from guidebooks to the battlefield--"indeed, he had made a quick study of the whole affair, simplifying it always until it bore a faint resemblance to one of his own parties" (p. 120)--Diver attempts to recreate the battle

¹⁸Bruccoli, p. 43.

in terms of a D. H. Lawrence love battle. He denies Abe North's statement that General Grant had invented the tactics for this kind of battle, dismissing Grant as the inventor of mass butchery. "'This kind of battle,'" he says, "'was invented by Lewis Carroll and Jules Verne and whoever wrote Undine, and country deacons bowling and marraines in Marseilles and girls seduced in the back lanes of Württemberg and Westphalia'" (p. 118). "At the moment Dick makes this speech," Stern declares, "he admits that he is a romantic. He does not yet know the truth of his own statements. He still believes, as yet only partly ruined, in the new world to which his generation has emerged from the war. He still believes in its freedoms and its millennial possibilities."¹⁹ Even as he dramatically announces that "'all my beautiful lovely safe world blew itself up here with a great gust of high explosive love,'" he must turn to Rosemary with the query, "'Isn't that true, Rosemary?'" (p. 118) to reinforce and support his limited (and we suspect wavering) vision. But Diver's fantasy explosion of his "'beautiful lovely safe world'" ironically focuses upon the very conflict which exploded forever an older America.

Immediately after the battlefield tour as they drive to catch the train, Diver stops to assist a young girl who has travelled from Tennessee to lay a wreath upon her slain brother's grave. Diver finds the girl in tears because the War Department has given her the wrong number and she has been unable to find her brother's name despite an extended search among the many grave stones. Although Diver's advice to the girl that she lay the wreath on any tomb without looking at the name seems to derive from his sympathy and concern for the girl, it is based nonetheless on the same disregard for the individual which marked the War Department's supplying

¹⁹Stern, p. 358.

her with the wrong number. Diver, like the whores in Fitzgerald's short story "The Night of Chancellorsville," (published in Esquire, February, 1935), selfishly--and mistakenly--evaluates the war in terms of how it disrupts and disturbs his personal life, an attitude influenced by a post-war world which does not want its pleasure-seeking hampered by personal responsibilities. Thus the young girl from Tennessee falls prey to Diver's corrupting influence, abandons her brother's wreath on the first grave inside the gate, and forgets her sorrow and brother so completely that she flirts with both Dick and Abe as the party awaits amid "smoke and chatter and music" for the train. "Then, leaving infinitesimal sections of Württembergers, Prussian Guards, Chasseurs Alpains, Manchester mill hands and Old Etonians to pursue their eternal dissolution under the warm rain, they took the train for Paris. They ate sandwiches of mortadelle sausage and bel paese cheese made up in the station restaurant, and drank Beaujolais" (p. 120). Untroubled by deep emotions and having been saved from personal involvement by Diver's intervention, the party returns easily to its casually nomadic life. Both the girl from Tennessee and the memory of her brother are casualties of Diver's romanticized fantasies about the war; they are casual victims of a romantic Diver who simplifies life until it resembles one of his own parties.

Having firmly re-established his motif of war and Diver's aloofness from the reality of war, Fitzgerald intensifies his focus upon a visibly disintegrating Dick Diver. Diver, like Abe North, flounders in the quagmire of inactivity, sinking deeper and deeper into its murky depths; even as he chides North indulgently about his prolonged artistic silence, Diver reveals that he has abandoned his own work on a scientific treatise. He also begins to waver in acknowledging his occupation, referring to himself

as an unpracticising doctor of medicine rather than a scientist (p. 124). Perhaps Diver best describes himself and his predicament when he tells Rosemary: "'I'm an old scientist all wrapped up in his private life'" (p. 131). An annoyed Diver also makes a revealing statement after rejecting Rosemary's screen test offer: "'The strongest guard is placed at the gateway to nothing,' he said. 'Maybe because the condition of emptiness is too shameful to be divulged'" (p. 131). That Diver is shamefully aware of the emptiness of his life is explicit in this reply.

For a brief moment, Fitzgerald thrusts Diver past the guard at the gate and into a sterile room where he is offered a glimpse of his future. Accompanied by Rosemary, Diver stops at a house at make an art purchase. The house was

. . . hewn from the frame of Cardinal de Retz's palace The outer shell, the masonry, seemed rather to enclose the future, so that it was an electric-like shock, a definite nervous experience, perverted as a breakfast of oatmeal and hashish, to cross that threshold The effect was unlike that of any part of the Decorative Arts Exhibition--for there were people in it, not in front of it. Rosemary had the detached false-and-exalted feeling of being on a set and she guessed that everyone else present had that feeling too.

There were about thirty people, mostly women, and all fashioned by Louisa M. Alcott or Madame de Segur Neither individually nor as a crowd could they be said to dominate the environment, as one comes to dominate a work of art he may possess, no matter how esoteric. No one knew what this room meant because it was evolving into something else, becoming everything a room was not; to exist in it was as difficult as walking on a highly polished moving stairway, and no one could succeed at all save with the qualities of a hand moving among broken glass--which qualities limited and defined the majority of those present.

These were of two sorts. There were the Americans and English, who had been dissipating all spring and summer, so that now everything they did had a purely nervous inspiration. . . . The other class, who might be called the exploiters, was formed by the sponges, who were sober, serious people by comparison, with a purpose in life and no time for fooling (pp. 133-34).

The grotesque society of the de Retz palace swallows Dick and Rosemary at a gulp and serves as a foreshadowing of the hazards and lurking destructiveness of a new, emerging women's world where no one dominates his environment but all move cautiously lest they be hurt. It is here that Rosemary overhears a conversation in which three women discuss the show-like but repetitive nature of the Divers' Paris life and question their entourage, especially "the entirely liquid Mr. North" (p. 134).

After Rosemary and Dick leave, passing "over the brief threshold of the future to the sudden past of the stone facade without" (p. 135), neither reacts nor comments extensively upon the scene they have just left because their growing emotional involvement first blurs, then blots, the experience from their minds. Thus Diver ignores the warning flashed by the sterile room; he is as blind to the Frankenstein-like society in the re-structured de Retz palace as he was to the true nature of the society clinging to the similarly re-structured Villa Diana. In both palaces, his blindness originates with his surrender to an ill-advised and romanticized love and with his disregard for the consequences of that love. Even the newly captivated Rosemary considers Dick, not a scientist, but an "organizer of private gaiety, curator of a richly incrustated happiness" (p. 137).

Ignoring the sterile room, Diver continues to insist on preserving the union with Nicole and summons reserves of intelligence to bolster his flagging defenses. He thus exposes himself--and those around him--to additional and continuing inroads upon the core of his philosophy. But the reserve forces he summons are quickly wasted in a devastating and disastrous, although excitement-filled, continuous party. He is a general leading his troops from one exciting battle to another and for Rosemary, "the enthusiasm, the selflessness, behind the whole performance ravished her; the technic of

moving many varied types, each as immobile, as dependent on supplies of attention as an infantry battalion is dependent on rations, appeared so effortless that he still had pieces of his own most personal self for everyone" (p. 139). "Rosemary was one of a dozen people he had 'worked over' in the past years: these had included a French circus clown, Abe and Mary North, a pair of dancers, a writer, a painter, a comedienne from the Grand Guignol, a half-crazy pederast from the Russian Ballet, a promising tenor they had staked to a year in Milan." " . . . There was a pleasingness about him [Diver] that simply had to be used--those who possessed that pleasingness had to keep their hands in, and go along attaching people that they had no use to make of" (p. 149). Thus Diver not only weakens himself but he adversely affects those who attach themselves to him.

The Norths illustrate the full impact of the weakening process upon those attached to the Divers. The gradual dissolution of Abe North is significant because it functions as an ominous foreshadowing of the fate of Dick Diver. The party proves the final blow to an already weakened Abe North. Still drunk the next day as he departs from the Gare Saint-Lazare, Abe, desperately craving and hopelessly dependent upon alcohol, remarks upon the now insoluble dilemma which confronts him: "' . . . when you're sober you don't want to see anybody, and when you're tight nobody wants to see you'" (p. 144). Alcohol and the equally addictive gay existence of the Divers have perverted Abe's will to survive, to live, into an equally forceful will to destroy himself, to die.

Although Abe North occupies little space in Tender Is the Night, his role is, nonetheless, an extremely important one in the novel. He not only foreshadows Dick Diver's dissolution but expands Fitzgerald's indictment against a post-war world which emasculates and destroys its men of talent

and dedication. Fitzgerald intended the indictment to be harsh and double-barreled, leveled at both America and at Abe North himself. "Furthermore," as William Goldhurst observes, "Abe North's decline is a counterpoint to the decline of Dick Diver . . .";²⁰ it helps us to explain and understand what happens to Diver. North, like Diver, initially represents the potential of a Grant at Galena and begins his career as a musician with "a brilliant and precocious start" (p. 91). But North shares Diver's romantic craving for a union of intelligence and money. Despite his promising start, therefore, North now spends his time as a participant in the Divers' leisurely life at the Villa Diana, and we learn that he has composed nothing for seven years. Thus, Abe and Dick expose themselves and their talents to the potentially corrupting influences of leisure and money.

The shooting in the station, where Abe is awaiting his train, symbolizes the current state of affairs. Not only do the shots represent the eruption of violence between two "unalterably opposed" worlds, but they delineate the nature of the combatants as well. The shots are fired by Maria Wallis, "a tall girl with straw hair like a helmet" (p. 144), whose description and actions bespeak the increasing violence and dominance of women in the new era. The faceless and nameless male victim is shot through his identification card to symbolize his fading and insignificant role in the new world and to foreshadow the fade-outs of North and Diver.

With the sound of the shots still ringing in his ears, Diver renews his advances toward Rosemary and "for the first time it occurred to him

²⁰William Goldhurst, F. Scott Fitzgerald and his Contemporaries (Cleveland, 1963), p. 119.

that Rosemary had her hand on the lever more authoritatively than he" (p. 147).²¹ Diver becomes "profoundly unhappy and the subsequent increase of egotism tended momentarily to blind him to what was going on round about him, and deprive him of the long ground-swell of imagination that he counted on for his judgments" (p. 148). "Dignified in his fine clothes, with their fine accessories, he was yet swayed and driven as an animal. Dignity could come only with an over-throwing of his past, of the effort of the last six years" (pp. 152-53). Diver has finally fallen casualty to his own internal dissension and no longer can he mask or elude--with fine clothes and endless parties--the turmoil and guilt inherent in his failure to adequately defend or pursue his true talent.

With his external and internal world in turmoil, with signs of dissolution at every hand, Diver attempts to rationalize his own position. He argues that smart men, talented men, have always gone to pieces, that "'smart men play close to the line because they have to--some of them can't stand it, so they quit'" (p. 161). Increasingly aware of his lessening stature and weakening self-control, Diver becomes intensely critical of Nicole as he begins to perceive the true nature of his opponent. "Though he thought she was the most attractive human creature he had even seen, though he got from her everything he needed, he scented battle from afar, and subconsciously he had been hardening and arming himself, hour by hour" (p. 161). But Diver's efforts are doomed from the outset because, like President Grant, he can no longer rely upon the old virtues of honor, courtesy, and courage to assist and defend him. The distance between Diver's

²¹Fitzgerald later reveals to the reader that Dick's earlier suspicions about Rosemary's control are painfully accurate; she writes her mother that she has now fallen in love with a movie director and wants to leave for Hollywood. Of course, she adds in an aside, she still "loves" Dick too.

new world and the older America of his father is suggested by the appearance of the gold-star mothers, an assembly of women gathered to honor their war dead:

Over his wine Dick looked at them again; in their happy faces, the dignity that surrounded and pervaded the party, he perceived all the maturity of an older America. For a while the sobered women who had come to mourn for their dead, for something they could not repair, made the room beautiful. Momentarily, he sat again on his father's knee, riding with Mosby while the old loyalties and devotions fought on around him. Almost with an effort he turned back to his two women at the table and faced the whole new world in which he believed (p. 162).

But in that new world, represented by Nicole and Rosemary, Diver has allowed himself to be effaced and his true talent to be submerged. The "Dicole" with which Diver and Nicole sign communications indicates this loss of identity. Confronted with reminders of "the maturity of an older America," of "old loyalties and devotions," Diver becomes increasingly aware of, and concurrently ashamed of, his financial dependence upon Nicole, his emotional entanglement with Rosemary, and his relinquishment of the past. Dressed beyond his own means in finely tailored clothes, he constitutes a false promise to the shopkeepers and an artificial advertisement of success to himself. He confesses that his "'politeness is a trick of the heart'" (p. 176). "From his father Dick had learned the somewhat conscious good manners of the young Southerner coming north after the Civil War. Often he used them, and just as often he despised them because they were not a protest against how unpleasant selfishness was, but against how unpleasant it looked" (p. 176).

Diver's major rationale for his allegiance with the new world--the dedication of his life and talent to Nicole's recovery and to protecting her from responsibility--is shattered when the second wave of violence

sweeps over him. The body of a Negro, an acquaintance of Abe North, is found stabbed to death on Rosemary's bed. In an effort to spare the young actress embarrassment and unwarranted publicity, he quickly takes clean sheets from his room to put on Rosemary's bed. In his excitement and concern for Rosemary's well-being, he thrusts into Nicole's hands the bloody sheets which cause her to suffer a mental collapse. Having failed Nicole as a husband through his extramarital advances toward Rosemary, he now fails her even as a psychiatrist. The blood-stained sheets which Diver thrusts into her hands evidently remind Nicole of the loss of her virginity to her father.

Following Nicole's breakdown in Paris, the Divers return to the Villa Diana, but Diver becomes increasingly dissatisfied with his existence. Retreat into his workroom brings the realization "that his little collection of pamphlets . . . contained the germ of all he would ever think or know" (p. 177). He resents the years wasted at New Haven, and remembering the story about the man who had worked for years on the brain of an armadillo, "he suspected that patient Germans were sitting close to the libraries of Berlin and Vienna callously anticipating him" (p. 178).

Diver now discovers that life with Nicole has suddenly become a nightmare "hour upon the stage" where he must cloak his emotions and stage his actions carefully. His original "self-protective professional detachment" from Nicole now meshes with "some new coldness in his heart" (p. 180). "As an indifference cherished, or left to atrophy, becomes an emptiness, to this extent he had learned to become empty of Nicole, serving her against his will with negations and emotional neglect" (pp. 180-81). Diver's loss is irreparable, his defeat irreversible. Broken in spirit and morale by the harsh realization that his qualified financial independence is at best a charade, that his pretense of rigid domesticity is becoming unbearably

arduous "in this effortless immobility," that "he was inevitably subjected to microscopic examination" and "that life was being refined down to a point" (p. 183), Diver confines himself to one room in the house and, like the prisoner of war he has become, listens to time.

The novel's fourth section, "Escape," portrays a Diver filled with memories and reminders of his past which serve to destroy his illusions about the present. The fantasy that "the world was all put together again by the gray-haired men of the golden nineties" (p. 190) quickly evaporates when Franz Gregorovius reappears and proposes a business partnership in a psychiatric clinic. Baby Warren overhears the proposal and Diver, thinking he can keep Baby from interfering and needing the egotistical reassurance that he can still control both Baby and the Warren money, invites her to participate in the discussion. The outcome is much different than Diver anticipates, however, and he is left with the grim realization that Baby's participation implies an attitude of "'We own you, and you'll admit it sooner or later. It is absurd to keep up the pretense of independence'" (p. 193). Bottling his anger and malice within himself--something he has not done since college days--Diver, resenting Baby's "cold rich insolence" (p. 193), makes a circumspect and incoherent attack on her and even more indirectly on Nicole by lashing out at good manners, arguing that "'if you spend your life sparing people's feelings and feeding their vanity, you get so you can't distinguish what should be respected in them'" (p. 193).

Despite his petty attack--which was not intended to declare his independence but only to salvage a sense of personal honor--Diver agrees to Franz's proposal and Baby's wishes. Later, ensconced in the new clinic, he awakens one morning from a dream filled with war and portents of disaster and diagnoses his own malady as "'non-combatant's shell-shock'" (p. 196).

The reintroduction of the war motif and renewed longings for the old world portend disaster for Diver; his "beautiful lovely safe world" of the past has indeed exploded forever and he is now trapped in a life and clinic purchased and controlled by the Warren money. Life at the clinic assumes a military regimen and regularity, but, like the inhabitants of the Eglantine and the Beeches, Diver is rigidly confined and restricted in his existence. The Eglantine and the Beeches, the respective male and female asylums "for those sunk into eternal darkness" (p. 197), are externally cheerful and graceful, but in reality are "camouflaged strong-points" replete with "concealed grills and bars and immovable furniture"; ". . . the light, graceful filigree work at a window was a strong, unyielding end of a tether . . . " (p. 199). The deceptively graceful asylums, both of which were designed and furnished by Nicole, equate strongly with Diver's existence at the clinic, even down to the same designer, and the description of Nicole marching around "giving abrupt, succinct orders to children and servants" (p. 197) smacks more of an efficient drill sergeant or camp commandant than it does the contented homemaker.

The dull routine of existence at the clinic proves too strenuous for the Divers, however, and they are soon straining at the end of their respective tethers. The break comes for Nicole when she receives a crank letter from a former patient falsely charging Diver with seducing her daughter. Despite the absurdity of the charge, Nicole broods over the letter's contents, wallowing deeper and deeper in her own mental darkness until she flings aside all restraints and maniacally plunges headlong through the crowds at the Agiri Fair, abandoning her husband and her children. Later as the family returns along a mountain road to the clinic, Nicole, with insane suicidal disregard for her own safety or that of her

children, jerks the car's steering wheel from Diver's hands, and the car plunges down a hillside. The car's descent, fortunately, is stopped by a tree. Diver must bear much of the responsibility for the near-disaster. He seems unable to predict and control Nicole's destructive violence, to formulate a workable prognosis and to act upon it. "The dualism in his views of her--that of the husband, that of the psychiatrist--was increasingly paralyzing his faculties. In these nine years she had several times carried him over the line with her, disarming him by exciting emotional pity or by a flow of wit, fantastic and dissociated, so that only after the episode did he realize, with the consciousness of his own relaxation from tension, that she had succeeded in getting a point against his better judgment" (pp. 204-05). Thus, Diver's psychiatric objectivity has been eroded until Diver and Nicole share essentially the same problem.

Diver's predicament is best symbolized by the fair's carousel and the ferris wheel. While searching for Nicole in the fair's crowds, Diver circles a merry-go-round, "keeping up with it till he realized he was running beside it, staring always at the same horse" (p. 205). The circular and endlessly nonproductive pursuit around the carousel epitomizes the tethered existence at the clinic but more importantly graphically conveys the fruitless nature of the Divers' married existence and of Dick's eternal efforts to "cure" Nicole. A comparable circular image is used for Nicole, and the repetitive circular, now-you-see-it-now-you-don't nature of Nicole's mental illness is suggested by her hysterical ride on the ferris wheel. Significantly, Diver realizes that somehow he and Nicole "had become one and equal, not opposite and complementary; she was Dick too, the drought in the marrow of his bones. He could not watch her disintegrations without participating in them. His intuition rilled out of him as tenderness and compassion--he could only take

the characteristically modern course, to interpose" (p. 207). With the decision to follow the modern course, Diver abandons even the pretense that he can again muster the scientific dedication required of a psychiatrist.

As a consequence of Nicole's violent mental relapse, Diver seeks refuge even more urgently in his fantasy reconstructions of the past. The retreat into memory takes Diver back to the simple and uncomplicated times when he sat as a child in the pews of his father's church in Buffalo. Diver's introduction to the Russian Prince Chillochev, that "parched papier-mache relic of the past" (p. 215), and the report of Abe North's death are followed by a slow mournful parade of war veterans going to place wreaths on their comrades' graves. "The column marched slowly with a sort of swagger for a lost magnificence, a past effort, a forgotten sorrow" (p. 217), and Diver, seeing the slow parade, mourns not only Abe but his own days of youth and the "lost magnificence" of an older America. When not escaping into the past, Diver is plagued with periods of painful introspection and self-analysis during which he belatedly realizes that he has lost himself. "Watching his father's struggles in poor parishes had wedded a desire for money to an essentially unacquisitive nature. It was not a healthy necessity for security--he had never felt more sure of himself, more thoroughly his own man, than at the time of his marriage to Nicole. Yet he had been swallowed up like a gigolo and had somehow permitted his arsenal to be locked up in the Warren safety-deposit vaults" (pp. 218-19). Diver finally realizes that his intelligence and integrity have been controlled and prostituted by money, specifically the Warren money, but he cannot understand why or how that fact has come about.

Yet despite his wasted nine years spent "teaching the rich the A B C's of human decency" (p. 219), Diver feels confident he possesses

sufficient reserves to carry on the struggle and to resurrect his decaying clan. That hollow confidence is shattered forever, nevertheless, with the death of his father, a symbolic death representing the demise of the past with all its moral restraints and codes of integrity and the demise of Diver's own spirit which depends upon that past for its sustenance. Diver had loved and respected his father; "again and again he referred judgments to what his father would probably have thought or done" (pp. 220-21). Unlike Diver, " . . . his father had been sure of what he was," believing that "nothing could be superior to 'good instincts,' honor, courtesy, and courage" (p. 221). When he hears the news of his father's death, observes Bruccoli, the son "is compelled to judge himself by the standards his father taught him--and by these standards Dick recognizes his corruption."²² Later, kneeling beside his father's grave, Diver bids a real and symbolic farewell to the past and all its values: "Dick had no more ties here [in the South] now and did not believe he would come back. . . . These dead, he knew them all, their weather-beaten faces with blue flashing eyes, the spare violent bodies, the souls made of new earth in the forest-heavy darkness of the seventeenth century. 'Good-bye, my father--good-bye, all my fathers'" (p. 222).

The Diver who returns to Rome, bereft of an historical past upon which he can rely and into which he can retreat for solace and rejuvenation, surrenders absolutely to the confusion of "the dim, turbulent alley" (p. 222) which is the present. He deliberately goes out of his way to renew his relationship with Rosemary Hoyt, whose lips are now "faintly chapped" (p. 228). Rosemary exercises complete control over Diver, and, despite the mutual recognition that neither is in love with the other, they

²²Bruccoli, p. 123.

surrender to their passions. Diver's rapid, drunken disintegration which follows that surrender culminates abruptly in his petty quarrel with the cab drivers and his subsequent beating and imprisonment. The quarrel itself stems from a drunken Diver's belated--and misplaced--refusal to compromise his principles by paying an exorbitant taxi fare, and because "the passionate impatience of the week leaped up in Dick and clothed itself like a flash in violence, the honorable, the traditional resource of his land; he stepped forward and clapped the man's face" (pp. 242-42). But Diver's violent defense of honor and his attempt to reassert himself end in disaster, and, as a consequence of the fight and his beating, he experiences feelings of "vast criminal irresponsibility" and hopelessness. Imprisoned, he is forced to undergo the ultimate humiliation of asking Baby Warren's aid to free him. (Diver's degeneration is also reflected in a scene during his release when an angry crowd mistakes him for a child rapist and murderer.) Diver's dependence upon Baby Warren's influence and money constitutes a total, unconditional surrender of body and spirit to an unprincipled representative of the post-war world. After the incident, Diver drugs himself to sleep with morphine. Baby, on the other hand, has "the satisfaction of feeling that, whatever Dick's previous record was, they now possessed a moral superiority over him for as long as he proved of any use" (p. 253).

As foreshadowed by his humiliating debacle in Rome, in the last section of the novel, "The Way Home," Diver ceases to exert any real influence or control over his existence. He manages for a short time to fulfill his role at the clinic, but his performance is perfunctory and degenerates as the habit of personal responsibility and discretion fades. In addition, Diver expresses impatience at his psychiatric chores at the clinic and

feels, as evidenced by his reaction to the Chilean homosexual and his whip-wielding father, a growing aversion to the clinic's wealthy clientele as well. The charm of the homosexual's manner and Diver's attraction to it despite the Chilean's perverse use of that charm cause him to realize that "the totality of a life may be different in quality from its segments, and also that life during one's late thirties seemed capable of being observed only in segments" (p. 263). He further perceives that, "in the broken universe of the war's ending," "for the remainder of his life he was condemned to carry with him the egos of certain people, early met and early loved and to be only as complete as they were complete themselves" (p. 263). Yet all the characters who have surrounded Diver throughout the novel have been incomplete and have dissipated through contact with the world of money and leisure.

"The broken universe of the war's ending" is one without order and harmony, and Diver's lack of control is perhaps best illustrated by the fateful surprise reappearance and abrupt disappearance of Nicole's father, Devereux Warren. As a result of that chance, fateful and fated encounter, Diver turns with increasing regularity to alcohol for escape, and, a mere week after Warren's disappearance, the partnership at the clinic is severed by Franz because of Diver's drinking. Diver accepts the dissolved partnership readily because "he had long felt the ethics of his profession dissolving into a lifeless mass" (p. 274). Another example of Diver's helplessness is his inability to control even his domestic existence; a drunken cook forces him to withdraw before her violent advance and to resort to bribery to remove her from the premises. In another episode, Diver tries to water ski with another man on his shoulders, but his physical strength has so declined in the two years since he last performed the trick that he is

incapable of getting to his feet despite repeated attempts. His inability to stand with the other man on his shoulders not only dramatizes the debilitating effects of his recent existence but more significantly also symbolizes his diminished capacity for shouldering other people's burdens. In the motorboat, Nicole misses "Dick's easy talent of taking control of situations and making them all right" (p. 301). Afterwards Nicole's uneasiness changes to contempt. When she is finally released from dependency upon Diver, Nicole thinks to herself, "'I'm almost complete'; 'I'm practically standing alone, without him'" (p. 307).

Diver has ceased to be a force in the novel. The last section is told almost entirely from Nicole's point of view, but it becomes increasingly hazardous to accept her assessments as valid. Even accepting her premise that she is now sane, Nicole is too self-centered to be a reliable narrator. For example, when she decides to have her affair with Tommy, "she blamed Dick for the immediate situation, and honestly thought that such an experiment might have a therapeutic value" (p. 310). But, because Dick has been defeated, because personal codes of courage, integrity and honesty are insufficient to combat the constant inundation "by a trickling of goods and money," Nicole and the moneyed existence she represents dominate the new post-war world. An interview with Fitzgerald published in 1927 may reveal his intentions here. When asked "Why isn't it any fun to be an American?" Fitzgerald replied, "'Because it's a woman's country.'"²³ Clearly one thematic strand of Tender Is the Night is the emerging dominance of women.

The "sane" Nicole, apparently once again conscious of her moneyed status, becomes the director and controller of her world. Intolerant of an

²³F. Scott Fitzgerald in his Own Time: A Miscellany, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli and Jackson R. Bryer (Kent, Ohio, 1971), p. 293. Hereafter cited as Miscellany.

increasingly impotent Dick Diver, the new Nicole lashes out in self-defensive anger, telling Diver: "'You're a coward! You've made a failure of your life, and you want to blame it on me'" (p. 319). When she finally frees herself from Diver's magnetism, it is clearly the old world values he represents that she is also rejecting. She struggles against "the old hypnotism of his intelligence, sometimes exercised without power but always with substrata of truth under truth which she could not break or even crack" (p. 319). She fights with her weapons, not his,

. . . fighting him with her small, fine eyes, with the plush arrogance of a top dog, with her nascent transference to another man, with the accumulated resentment of years; she fought him with her money and her faith that her sister disliked him and was behind her now; with the thought of the new enemies he was making with his bitterness, with her quick guile against his wining and dining slowness, her health and beauty against his physical deterioration, her unscrupulousness against his moralities--for this inner battle she even used her weaknesses, fighting bravely and courageously with the old cans and crockery and bottles, the empty receptacles of her expiated sins, outrages, mistakes. And suddenly, in the space of two minutes, she achieved her victory and justified herself to herself without lie or subterfuge, cut the cord forever (pp. 319-20).

Nicole's struggle and the arsenal of weapons with which she opposes Dick reveal conclusively that the new world and the old are indeed "unalterably opposed." Intelligence, truth, morality can never be reconciled with "plush arrogance," "quick guile," and "unscrupulousness." The passage quoted above also forcefully illustrates the consequence of new world erosion. Diver has been reduced to bitterness, to "wining and dining slowness," and to a state of physical deterioration. Having drained the strength and sustenance from the old world, the new world severs the umbilical cord which fed and molded it and marches off triumphant.

Tommy Barban, a soldier of fortune, is the man to whom she gives her new allegiance.²⁴ Her new relationship--and the new world--is best characterized by her reply to Tommy's observation that she has "white crook's eyes" and too much money: "'I suppose my grandfather was a crook and I'm a crook by heritage, so there we are'" (p. 311). For Nicole, "his assertion seemed to absolve her from all blame or responsibility and she had a thrill of delight in thinking of herself in a new way. New vistas appeared ahead, peopled with the faces of many men, none of whom she need obey or even love" (p. 312). It is the same irresponsible world to which her husband fell victim.

The irresponsibility and decadence of this new world are shown in the incident involving the jailing of Mary North and Sibley-Biers. The incident also sheds further light on Diver's complex character and motivations. Despite the fact that Diver has previously insulted both women and literally despises one of them, he goes to their aid because

the old fatal pleasingness, the old forceful charm, swept back with its cry "Use me!" He would have to go fix this thing that he didn't care a damn about, because it had early become a habit to be loved, perhaps from the moment when he had realized that he was the last hope of a decaying clan. On an almost parallel occasion, back in Dohmler's clinic on the Zurichsee, realizing this power, he had made his choice, chosen Ophelia, chosen the sweet poison and drunk it. Wanting above all to be brave and kind, he had wanted, even more than that, to be loved. So it had been. So it would ever be . . . (p. 321).

And so he goes to the aid of Mary North and Lady Caroline Sibley-Biers who, dressed as French sailors, had made advances toward two French girls. The Lesbian implications of their actions seem less important thematically than

²⁴Tommy Barban lacks complete control and power over Nicole although his barbaric and violent nature are easily compatible with the new world. He cannot dominate through money, an essential in the new world. In addition, the time chronology of the novel implies that Tommy's "good stocks" will shortly be wiped out in the Great Depression.

does their assumption of the masculine role. Even at the prison Diver experiences his old conflicting attitudes; "he was torn between a tendency to ironic laughter and another tendency to order fifty stripes of the cat and a fortnight of bread and water" (p. 322). But Diver again succumbs to the need to be loved and pretends that "they were the innocents that he knew they were not . . ." (p. 323). Lady Caroline's attitude parallels that of Baby Warren; Diver is expected to help because he is "an insanity doctor" and the hotel keeper Gausse, who is depicted as a noble old man with true understanding and possession of the old values, must aid Lady Caroline because he is only a servant. But that which "absolves" the two women of responsibility for their actions is money. Diver plays the new-world role, placing bribes in the appropriate places with money borrowed from Gausse. Later, when Lady Caroline has been released, she displays her unrepentant and self-righteous attitude and refuses to repay Gausse his money. Old Gausse curses her and, when she turns scornfully away, "planted his little foot in the most celebrated of targets" (p. 325). Old Gausse, despite his years of servitude, retains his courage and integrity, and his defense of those values stands in sharp contrast to Diver's vacillation and failure to do so.

Just how absolute and irreversible did Fitzgerald intend Diver's failure to be? During the twenties, Fitzgerald found his own dissatisfaction and pessimism voiced in Oswald Spengler's Decline of the West: "'Spenglerism,'" he declared, "'signals the death of this civilization There is now no mind of the race, there is now no great old man of the tribe, there are no longer any feet to sit at. People have to stage sham battles in their own minds.'" Fitzgerald went on to say in that interview, published in 1927, that "there has never been an American tragedy. There have only been

great failures."²⁵ Stern maintains that Fitzgerald intended Dick's "dive" as "the all-inclusive, individual summation of the disintegration of the social world, the breakdown of Western civilization that Fitzgerald felt around him and saw articulated in Spengler's Decline of the West."²⁶ If Stern is correct, then it is not surprising that the last chapter of Tender Is the Night conveys a deeply pervasive pessimism.

That pessimism becomes stronger and stronger as Diver fades out of the novel. No possibility of reconciliation with Nicole exists; she has "cut the cord forever" and is under the protectorship of her new husband, Tommy Barban. With that avenue effectively closed, Diver begins a progressive decline through a series of New York towns. Robert Long comments on this decline:

. . . Diver's move to upstate New York is, at least in part, a return to his place of origin. But there seems a further suggestiveness in the choice of this setting: TITN is filled with sharp contrasts, as, for example, between light and darkness, South and North. Associated with the South is the idea of order, cultural and moral, and a code of decency and chivalry, while the North suggests wealth and its industrialized might. Diver's eclipse in the North--and [sic] in the countryside of New England but in the little industrial towns of upstate New York, the heartland of the North--represents his final submergence in a money culture, in conditions bleakly materialistic.²⁷

Fitzgerald, I believe, carefully selected the name of each New York town to comment on Diver's decline and failure. Dick first settles in Buffalo, a name which commemorates a vanishing species, a victim of

²⁵Miscellany, pp. 275, 276.

²⁶Stern, p. 309.

²⁷Robert E. Long, "Dreiser and Frederic: The Upstate New York Exile of Dick Diver," Fitzgerald Newsletter (Spring 1967), pp. 1-2.

American greed and senseless violence.²⁸ Dick goes from Buffalo to Batavia, which suggests "diminishing way" (from bate, deduction/diminution; and via from the Latin "a road or way"). His next stop is Lockport and for a time Dick does indeed seem to "lock port," but then we learn that he has moved on to Geneva. Geneva serves to remind us of the young Diver who studied in Geneva, Switzerland, and of the disparity between the dreams of his youth and the reality of his middle age. The last town in which he settles is Hornell, New York, "a very small town" (p. 334), the name of which suggests "horizon nil" (from hor, horizon; and nell, nothing). At the novel's end, declares Bruccoli, "Dick is both ruined and spent, an emotional bankrupt drifting from small town to smaller town, lacking the energy to be a charlatan [as in an earlier version]. He has been defeated through defects in his character, and in the process his resources have been so completely drained that there is no hope for him."²⁹ The hopelessness of Diver's situation parallels that of ex-President Grant who, racked by cancer, died in obscurity in upstate New York.

The tone of the final chapter, as Bruccoli remarks, is "one of infinite regret."³⁰ Dick ceases to request that his children Lanier and Topsy, whose very names belong to the South, be sent to America, suggesting his

²⁸Fitzgerald's own father, Edward, had moved with his family to Buffalo in 1898 after his business in St. Paul had failed. After fifteen tiresome years of working as a travelling salesman and of frequent moving from one town to another, Edward Fitzgerald was fired. The end came while they were at Buffalo, and Fitzgerald wrote of the impact upon his father in his *Ledger* (1906): "That morning he had gone out a comparatively young man, a man full of strength, full of confidence. He came home that evening an old man, a completely broken man. He had lost his essential drive, his immaculateness of purpose. He was a failure the rest of his days'" (Piper, p. 9). Fitzgerald possibly drew upon these personal associations to illustrate Diver's irreversible decline.

²⁹Bruccoli, pp. 83-84.

³⁰Bruccoli, p. 159.

complete surrender of his old life and of the Southern code which once gave direction to that life. Thus Tender Is the Night fades to its conclusion. The new world--represented by the selfishness, irresponsibility, hedonism, amorality, and moneyed arrogance of the Warren clan--has triumphed.

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FITZGERALD'S DICK DIVER:
A WARRIOR FADING INTO OBSCURITY

by

DAVID LEO TANGEMAN

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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Tender Is the Night traces the decline, failure, and retreat of Doctor Richard (Dick) Diver, the protagonist of F. Scott Fitzgerald's last complete novel. It is a novel of opposites, of horn-locked antagonists struggling desperately to maintain their independence. Armed with pre-Civil War codes of courage, integrity and honesty, Diver fights a losing battle against the pressures and temptations of a post-World War I world, a world dominated by the "new" woman, dedicated to money and leisure, and characterized by corruption and dissipation. The basic--and central--conflict of the novel is not external, however, but internal. Dick Diver, similar to the persona in Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale," is a man divided within himself. He wants to be both the scientist and the romantic, but for him the two roles are mutually exclusive and, Hamlet-like, he wavers fatally in his selection. His values are those of the old Southern aristocracy inherited from his father, a Southerner from Virginia who as a young man migrated to the North after the Civil War. Ill-equipped, the son is thrust into a world which he does not comprehend and into a struggle which he is fated to lose. Diver feels as much attraction to the temple's money changers, who can underwrite the romantic life, as he does to the pure altar of psychiatry. His inability to resolve his own internal civil war, to choose between science and romance, leads him inevitably into an external conflict triggered by his marriage to his social and philosophic opposite, Nicole Warren, a wealthy girl from Chicago. Dick Diver is, therefore, a flawed warrior irresolutely defending his pre-Civil War codes against the gradual encroachments of a new post-World War I society which

ultimately defeats him and forces him, "the last hope of a decaying clan," into an obscure retreat. The new world, represented by the selfishness, irresponsibility, hedonism, amorality, and moneyed arrogance of Nicole and the Warren clan, triumphs. Diver is defeated because his personal codes of courage, integrity and honesty are insufficient to combat the constant inundation "by a trickling of goods and money."